Purchase of edible Oils by NDDB

515. DR. YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) what are the quantity of vegetable oils and their values purchased by NDDB so far this year in pursuance of its market intervention scheme;

(b) whether the NDDB is seeking help of any private agencies for its procurement operations; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI BHAJAN LAL): (a) to (c) NDDB and seven State Cooperative Marketing Federations financed by NDDB have purchased oilseeds and edible oils of the value of Rs. 300 crores so far in pursuance of its market intervention scheme. Since edible oil is known to be a speculative commodity and since NDDB has a responsibility to maintain wholesale prices at a reasonable level in the lean season, it is not considered expedient in the public interest to indicate at present the quantity of oilseeds and oils purchased by NDDB.

In the course of market intervention operation, NDDB make use of not only the cooperatives but also normal private marketing channels for securing efficient and speedy operations in the interests of the farmers.

Agricultural production without use of pesticides

516. SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the members of the National Core Group on Agriculture have suggested that the goal of sustainable agricultural production should be achieved without the use of pesticides as the failure of pesticides to control pests has been established; and

(b) if so, the action taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHYAM LAL YADAV): (a) The recently held meeting of the National Core Group on Pesticides Problems and Alternatives, organised by Voluntary Health Association of India is reported to have felt that pesticides have failed to control many pests, and therefore, the country should move towards the goal of sustainable agricultural production without pesticides.

(b) The Government has enacted the Insecticide Act, 1968. Under the provisions of the said Act, no pesticide is allowed to be imported or manufactured in the country without having been registered for this purpose. A pesticide is registered for use only after satisfying on its efficacy and safety based on scientific evaluation. Pesticide which are recommended for use are effective in controlling pests if used as per the prescribed package of practices. However, in few cases wherever the continued use of a pesticide induces either resistance/resurgence in a pest, other methods of pest control including the use of alternate pesticides are recommended.

Pavement Dwellers in big Cities

517. SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that over 2.5 million people in the country spend their entire lives on pavements in the big cities; and

(b) if so, what steps are being taken by Government to provide shelter to the pavement dwellers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI DALBIR SINGH): (a) As per the 1981 Census, the total number of urban houseless population in the country was 0.61 million including 0.16 million in the 12 metropolitan cities.

(b) Housing is a State subject and all housing schemes are implemented by the State Governments according to their priority and requirements. However the Central Government has, launched a new scheme for provision of shelter to the pavement dwellers, in the major metropolitan cities. Under this scheme, the Central Govt. gives grants-in-aid at the rate of Rs. 4000/- per household for identified pavement dwellers' for construction of individual dwelling units. The Scheme also provides for construction of night shelters and pay & use toilets. During the year 1988-89, grants-in-aid amounting to Rs. 2.99 crores have been released for the implementation of the scheme in the cities of Calcutta, Hyderabad and Madras. This will benefit 6410 pavement dwellers.

Establishment of Consumer Councils and Courts at the Centre and at District levels

518. SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Consumer Protection Act, 1986 envisages formation of Consumer Councils and Courts at the Centre and at the District level;

(b) what is the number of such Councils and Courts that have been established so far; and

(c) the reasons for delay in implementing the scheme?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI D. L. BAITHA): (a) The Consumer Protection Act, 1986 envisages formation of Consumer Protection Council at the Centre and the State Level and redressal machinery at national, State and district level. It does not envisage formation of Consumer Protection Council at District level.

(b) and (c) The Central Government has constituted the Central Consumer Protection Council and the National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission which have started functioning. The State Government/UT Administrations are responsible for setting up of State level Consumer Protection Council, Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission (State Commission) and Consumer Dispute Redressal Forum (District Forum). As per information available, so far, 28 States/UTs have set up the State level Consumer Protection Council. Redressal machinery have started functioning in 7 States/UTs. 8 States/UTs. have notified the State Commission/District Forums. In addition, Central Government has conveyed its approval to 5 States to set up this machinery.

PDS facilities to residents of unauthorised colonies

519. SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the basic purpose of introducing Public Distribution System is to provide certain essential commodities at subsidised rates to the public, particularly the poorest of the poor;

(b) if so, whether Government are aware that the most vulnerable sections of society are not able to avail of this benefits as they are not entitled to get a 'ration card' in the absence of a regular residential address in an authorised colony, etc.;

(c) whether Government have considered the necessity of extending Public Distribution System facility to those poor people who are citizens of India but are not fortunate enough to live in any recognised colony and go under the definition of "pavement dwellers"; and

(d) if so, what are the details in this regard?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI D. L. BAITHA): (a) to (d) The purpose of the Public Distribution System is to provide essential commodities at reasonable prices to the public, including vulnerable sections of the society, as also to act as an anti-inflationary measure. The implementation of the PDS being the responsibility of the